

NORTHWOODS JOURNAL – MARCH 2023

A Free Publication about Enjoying and Protecting Marinette County's Outdoor Life

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2023 Marinette County Parks Stickers Now Available

<https://www.marinettecounty.com/departments/parks/general-information/annual-parks-sticker/>

The 2023 annual Marinette County parks stickers are now available! Stickers are \$25.00 (65 years and up and Veterans are \$12.00). Marinette County operates 22 county park properties: 11 scenic "large parks" with 6 of them offering well-kept, beautifully wooded campgrounds, 4 small day use/wayside parks, 6 boat landings, and a youth camp. Come hike, picnic, whitewater raft, fish, or just relax and enjoy the beautiful scenery.



You can purchase stickers online at the website above, or visit the Marinette County Parks Department office in the Marinette County Courthouse or County Libraries. Other vendors around the county include:

- A&K Bait & Tackle, 1616 Shore Drive, Marinette
- BP Hwy. 141 (828 Main St.), Wausaukee
- Driftwood Sport Shop, Hwy. 141 & County V, Amberg
- Pembine Pawn & Gun, Hwy. 141 Pembine
- Eight Hi Club, Hwy. 8, Goodman
- High Falls One Stop, Cty. X & Kottke Rd., Crivitz
- Tall Oaks, Parkway Rd. & Engel Ln., Crivitz
- Corner Convenience, W11701 Cty. Rd. W, Crivitz
- T & B One stop, Hwy. 141, Crivitz
- Athelstane Market, N12780 CTH AC
- Red Pine BP, Hwy. C & Parkway Rd., Athelstane

The Annual Park Vehicle Sticker will arrive by mail. The sticker must be permanently affixed to the corner of the windshield on the passenger side of the vehicle. Temporary placement (such as tape, clear plastic envelopes, etc.) will not be accepted. Sticker is only for the vehicle it was purchased for. It shall not be given away, exchanged or sold. *If you have a second car, you*

must purchase a second sticker at full price. No Vendors are permitted to give a discount. Marinette County does not guarantee that all parks will be accessible at all times. Daily fees paid at Marinette County Parks do not apply towards the payment of the Annual Vehicle Sticker.

NOTES:

1. The Annual Sticker is only for day use of parks and boat landings. Camping costs are extra. Campers, please note that day use fee is included in the camping fees - two vehicle stickers are included when you register and good for length of stay.
2. An Annual Sticker is not always available during the summer season from a park employee at the park. When a park employee is not available to sell you an Annual Sticker, you must immediately purchase a one-day vehicle permit in order to use a park. The one-day permit cost is \$5.00 and is available at the park entrance or on-line. No change is available at the park so please bring exact money with you. One-day use permit is good for all county parks that are visited that same day.

Marinette County Parks and Boat Landings

Parks: Twin Bridge Park, Morgan Park, Goodman Park, McClintock Park, Twelve Foot Falls Park, Veteran's Memorial Park, Lake Noquebay Park, Dave's Falls Park, Thunder Mountain Park, Menominee River Park, Long Slide Falls Park, Dolan Lake Park and Michaelis Park. Boat Landings: Bear Point, Carviou, Cox, Little River, Twin Creeks, and McAllister.



For more information about parks, visit <https://www.marinettecounty.com/departments/parks/general-information/campgrounds-and-parks/>. To plan your visit and explore what to do in Marinette County, visit <https://www.exploremarinettecounty.com/>.



Goodman Park Lodge



As Winters Warm, Nutrient Pollution Threatens 40% of U.S.

<https://www.uvm.edu/news/gund/winters-warm-nutrient-pollution-threatens-40-us>

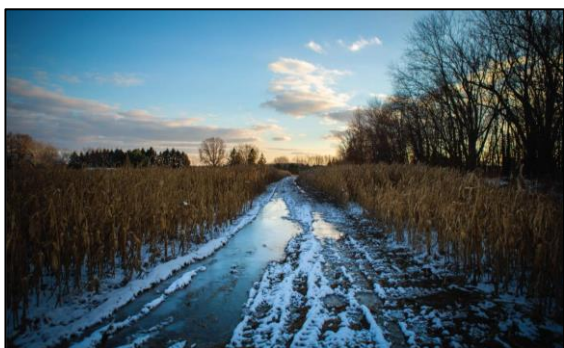


Nutrient pollution, a major water quality threat, is now happening in U.S. winters due to climate change, a new national study finds.

Scientists are ringing alarm bells about a significant new threat to U.S. water quality: as winters warm due to climate change, they are unleashing large amounts of nutrient pollution into lakes, rivers, and streams. The first-of-its-kind national study finds that previously frozen winter nutrient pollution - unlocked by rising winter temperatures and rainfall - is putting water quality at risk in 40% of the contiguous U.S., including over 40 states.

Nutrient runoff into rivers and lakes - from phosphorus and nitrogen in fertilizers, manure, animal feed, and more - has affected water quality for decades. However, most research on nutrient runoff in snowy climates has focused on the growing season. Historically, cold temperatures and a continuous snowpack froze nutrients like nitrogen and phosphorous in place until the watershed thawed in the spring, when plants could help absorb excess nutrients.

But winters are the fastest warming U.S. season, and the seasonal snowpack in much of the U.S. has become less stable. Increased rain-on-snow, snowmelt, and rainfall events now carry nutrients and soil into streams and rivers during winter when dormant vegetation cannot absorb them. As a result, winter runoff impacts on nutrient pollution has quickly progressed from rare or nonexistent to far worse than during other times of the year.



As winters warm, chemicals frozen on farms and fields are thawing early, when no plants exist to absorb them. That's unleashing winter runoff pollution into groundwater, streams and lakes.

The study was published in [Environmental Research Letters](#) by a team of scientists from the University of Vermont, University of Colorado, University of Kansas, and University of Michigan. "We are clearly seeing much larger amounts of cloudy water and sediment traveling through U.S. watersheds in winter," said Carol Adair, a University of Vermont researcher. "The idea of winter nutrient pollution is new, because it's a relatively recent impact of climate change with the potential to cause significant problems for people and the environment - from algae blooms that make swimming dangerous to 'dead zones' that kill fish stocks." Of particular

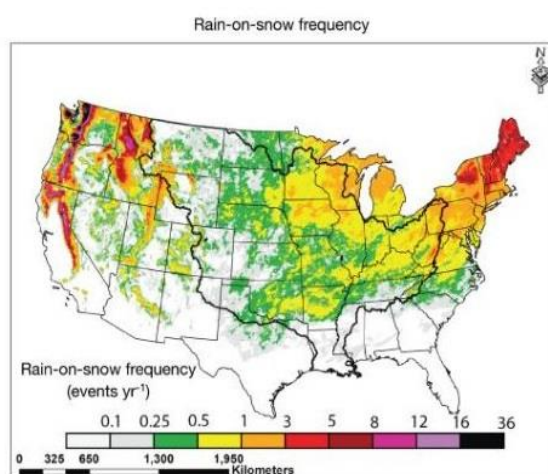
concern are so-called "rain-on-snow" events, researchers say, which can cause large, economically and environmentally devastating floods. The team used geospatial datasets to explore the impacts of rain-on-snow in U.S. regions with large pools of nitrogen and phosphorous.

The scientists found that rain-on-snow affects 53% of the contiguous U.S. and puts 50% of U.S. nitrogen and phosphorus pools at risk of export to groundwater and surface water. Where these factors converge, more than 40% of the contiguous U.S. is at risk of nutrient export and soil loss from rain-on-snow events.

Analyzing the Mississippi River floods of 2019, researchers found rain-on-snow events delivered a large pulse of nutrients and sediment into the river and Gulf of Mexico - at much greater levels than a similar growing season rainfall event would - contributing to the Gulf of Mexico's eighth largest dead zone on record. Dead zones occur when bacteria that thrive on excess nutrients remove too much oxygen from the water, causing massive die-offs of fish or other aquatic animals.

"We hope this study is a wake-up call for government agencies and researchers, because it reveals that 40% of the U.S. is producing winter pollution - but no one is tracking exactly how much, where it's going, or the impacts on water quality and ecosystems," said Adair, a researcher at UVM's Gund Institute for Environment, the Rubenstein School of Environment and Natural Resources, and Vermont EPSCoR. "That's a big problem that urgently needs addressing."

The study's findings are visualized in several maps (see example below) showing projected winter nutrient pollution across over 40 U.S. states, including large swaths of the Northeast, the northern Midwest and central plains, the Pacific Northwest, and the Sierra and Rocky Mountain ranges.



The research marks the first large-scale study of the impact of rain-on-snow on nutrient runoff and water quality. The findings are conservative and do not include the additional risks from snowmelt and winter rainfall events, nor the impact of winter runoff on downstream ecosystems and communities.

In addition to winters being the fastest warming season in the U.S., the longest cold snaps are becoming shorter, and the number of days with temperatures below 32°F is expected to continue to decline across the country, researchers say. Rain is also becoming more frequent than snow, a trend predicted to continue across the U.S.

Upcoming Demonstration Farm Network Event

<http://gbwsdemo.info/events/>



Join the Green Bay West Shore Demonstration Farms Network and the Shawano County Forage Council to the "Sharing On-Farm Success – Forage, Crop, and Conservation Updates" event on March 7th from 10am to 3pm at the Red Maple Country Club in Suring (501 Golf Course Road).

\$10 Registration due by March 3 – lunch is provided. Register online here: https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdA7D5mzw0q8fUlnWqlxZBIn_gyU3wnjCwIXMvCZc8tN3895A/viewform. You can also call the Shawano County Extension to register and pay at the event: 715-526-6136.

Several sessions will be offered with different topics & speakers:

- Building Soil Health & Resiliency in NE Wisconsin Soils – Jacob Brey, Brey Cycle Farms
- Agronomic Research Updates – Tar Spot, Waterhemp, Biologics, & more – Scott Reuss, UW-Extension Regional Crops Educator
- Making it Work Above Hwy. 29 – Farmer Experiences from the Demo Farms – Brown Star Farm, Finger Family Farms, Mahoney Farms, & Wagner Farms
- What are Agronomists Thinking for 2023? – Regional Agronomist Panel
- Midwest Forage Association Updates – Chelsea Russell, MFA

The Green Bay West Shore Demonstration Farms Network is a group of farms dedicated to demonstrating conservation practices within the Peshtigo, Oconto, and Pensaukee Watersheds, with the goal of reducing phosphorus and sediment runoff.

If you are interested in receiving updates or would like more information about the network, visit on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/GBWSDemo/>.

You can also contact the Oconto County Land & Water Conservation Division at catie.haight@co.oconto.wi.us or call 920-834-7154.



DNR Publishes 2022 Fish Stocking Summary

<https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/newsroom/release/66966>



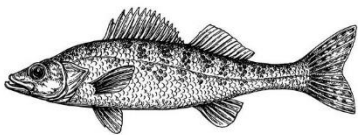
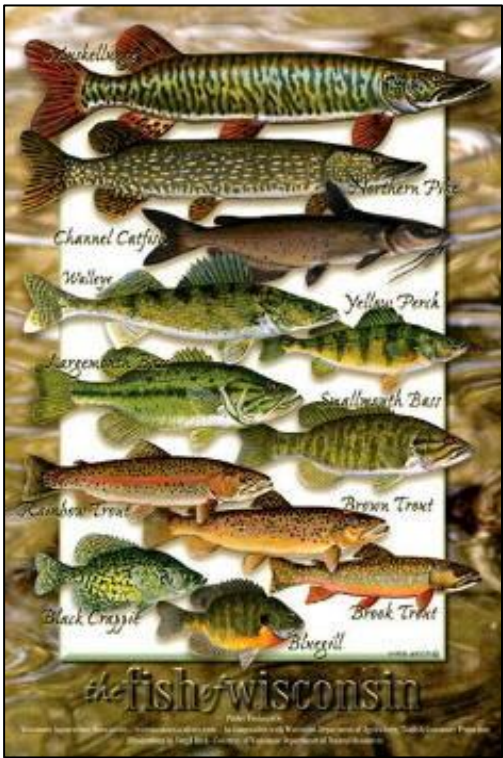
On February 15, 2023, The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) released the 2022 stocking numbers for inland waterbodies and the Great Lakes. Over six million fish were stocked in 2022 to fill stocking quotas established by fisheries biologists.

Every year, the DNR raises millions of yearling and fingerling fish to stock into waterbodies across the state. Stocking helps boost natural fish populations, maintain or restore existing fisheries, and support recreational fishing opportunities. Stocking is also used to evaluate management actions or propagation techniques. DNR fish crews stocked these species into inland waters across the state in 2022.



2022 INLAND STOCKING SUMMARY

Species	Total Number Stocked
Brook trout	232,896
Brown trout	315,981
Lake sturgeon	12,421
Lake trout	78,099
Largemouth bass	114,241
Muskellunge	41,970
Northern pike	48,181
Rainbow trout	267,198
Walleye	1,588,918



Below is a list of the fish stocked into Lake Michigan (LM), Lake Superior (LS) and their tributaries in 2022.

2022 GREAT LAKES STOCKING SUMMARY

Species	Total Number Stocked
Brook trout (LM)	50,021
Brown trout	475,701 (LM) 140,839 (LS)
Chinook salmon (LM)	893,650 145,095*
Coho salmon (LM)	412,273
Lake sturgeon (LM)	4,185
Lake trout (LS)	88,027
Muskellunge (LM)	3,029
Steelhead (LM)	850,772 150,497*
Splake (LS)	47,770
Walleye (LS)	109,850

*These fish were raised by the Michigan DNR and were stocked by Wisconsin DNR staff. They helped supplement Wisconsin DNR stocking quotas but are not included in the Wisconsin DNR's stocking database.



These numbers include large fingerling walleye purchased by the DNR from private growers or tribal hatcheries that contributed to filling walleye stocking quotas. These numbers do not include fish supplied by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the stocking of fry or any other private or tribal hatchery stocking events. Visit the DNR's [stocking database](#) to view stocking data from previous years or stocking numbers for a specific location.

For general fishing information, regulations, licenses, where to fish, youth fishing, angler education, fisheries staff contacts and more, visit <https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/topic/Fishing>.



Strong Falls Mountain Biking Trails to Open in Spring

<https://www.facebook.com/peshtigoriverrails/>

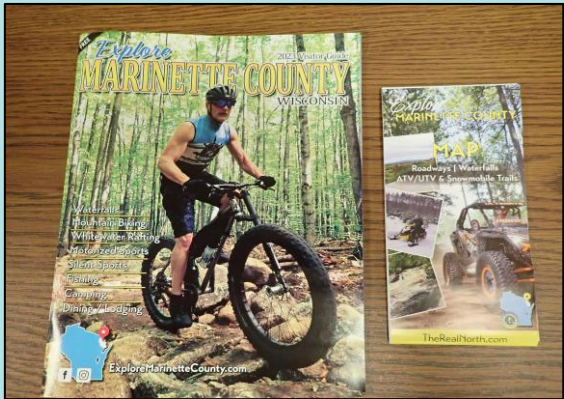


The Strong Falls Trail System in Marinette County, Wisconsin has gone from project kickoff, planning and design, to 10.5 miles of trails created in exactly one year. "That's wicked fast," said Mike Repyak, [IMBA Trail Solutions](#) Director of Planning and Design.

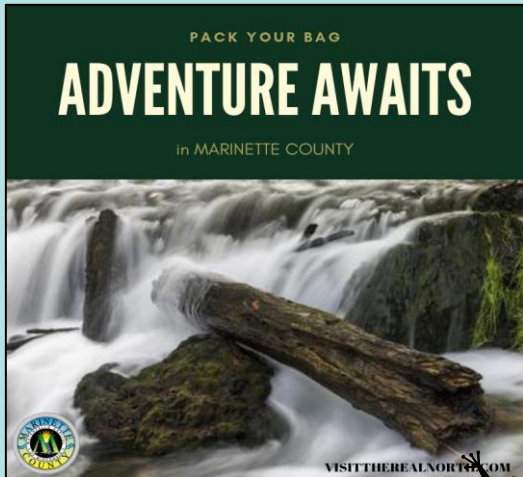
How did they make it happen? Enthusiastic partnerships between Marinette County, IMBA Local Partner [Marinette Area Mountain Bike Association](#) (MAMBA), IMBA Trail Solutions and [Rock Solid Trail Contracting, LLC](#). By combining the largest trail planning and design organization in the country with one of the largest professional trail construction firms, the county hit a home run to get quality trails on the ground efficiently and quickly.

Read more about this new trail system: <https://www.imba.com/blog/professionally-built-trails-wicked-fast-wisconsin-northwoods>. They'll officially open up in spring 2023.

Marinette County 2023 Tourism Guide & County Activity Map Now Available!



From dining and lodging to fishing holes and campgrounds, see what The Real North has to offer in the 2021 Marinette County Visitor Guide! This 60-page guide is a handy reference for visitors and residents to learn about local accommodations, waterfall tours, trails, parks, shopping and so much more. To request a free copy, visit www.therealnorth.com/ or call the Tourism office at 715-732-7473.

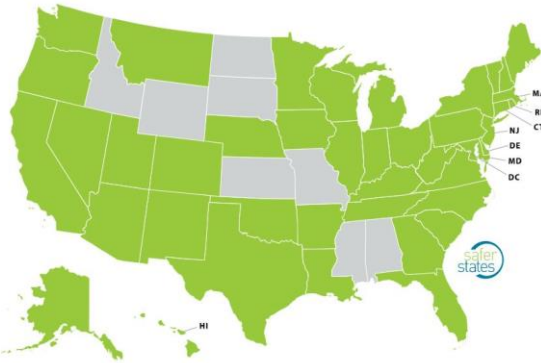


States are Taking Aim at Toxic Chemicals

<https://grist.org/beacon/states-are-taking-aim-at-toxic-chemicals/> & <https://www.saferstates.org/vision/>



Amid growing awareness of the dangers posed by toxic chemicals, many states are poised to take legislative action this year. According to an analysis released today by [Safer States](#), a national alliance of environmental health organizations, at least 31 states will consider more than 260 policies to address the dangers of “forever chemicals,” polyvinyl chloride, formaldehyde, parabens, and other substances.



[31 states](#) are considering [288 policies](#) to protect people from toxic chemicals. [293 state policies](#) have been adopted in [38 states](#).

For over a decade, Safer States has united state advocacy groups to pass common-sense policies that keep harmful chemicals out of our food, water, and air. Together, states are building a future in which everyone can count on safe products, clean water and healthy communities.

“It’s a super exciting year,” Sarah Doll, Safer States’ national director, told me. She said the gathering momentum and “bipartisan-ness” of proposed policies bodes well for public health and the environment.

As in the [past two years](#), Safer States’ report found that so-called “forever chemicals” — shorthand for per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances, or PFAS — are expected to “dominate” states’ toxics-related agendas in 2023, with at least 16 states considering tighter regulations to limit or disclose their use in products like food packaging, cookware, and clothing.



PFAS are a class of more than 9,000 chemicals that have been used [since the 1940s](#) for their water- and stain-resistant properties, but research now links them to various health issues including cancer, immune disease, and hypertension - and shows that they don’t break down in the environment. Studies have found PFAS in the blood of [98 percent of the U.S. population](#).

Some states that have already restricted PFAS are going further — either by banning their incineration or by extending the statute of limitations for lawsuits against the chemicals’ manufacturers. [Thousands of lawsuits](#) have already been filed against PFAS manufacturers in an effort to recoup cleanup costs, and some estimates say manufacturers could face liabilities of up to \$30 billion.

Other policies on the docket involve eliminating chemical additives from cosmetics, setting up testing and monitoring programs for microplastics in drinking water, and creating new disclosure requirements for chemicals of concern. Hawaii, Illinois, Maryland, Minnesota, and New Jersey are considering banning heavy metals and chemical additives from plastics labeled as recyclable.

The Problem - harmful chemicals are making us sick

Thousands of chemicals in the products we use every day end up in our environment, our homes, and our bodies. Exposure to toxic chemicals raises the risk of diseases like cancer, infertility, and learning disabilities.

We eat them. Chemicals used in food packaging and production leach into our food and into us.

We drink them. Harmful chemicals from manufacturing of cooking, cleaning, personal care products, and old plumbing contaminate drinking water supplies.

We breathe them. Toxics like flame retardants in furniture and electronics as well as solvents in cleaners and building materials are found in the air we breathe — both in our neighborhoods and inside our homes.

We Are All Responsible For Public Health

We have the right to be safe in our homes. We can all do our part by making healthy choices, but none of us can protect our families from toxics we can’t see and don’t know are there. Corporate polluters must face the consequences for their impact on public health and safety. The chemical industry and companies that make and sell products should be held responsible for their pollution.

Safer States and our partners work to advance common-sense policies that hold all of us to our responsibilities, making human health and safety our top priority.

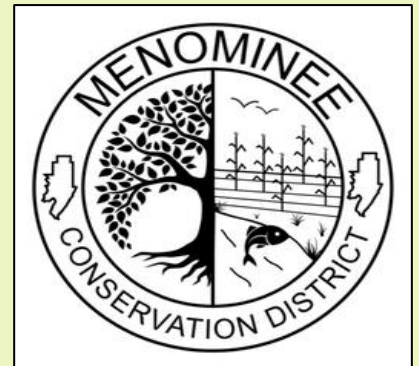


To view the Wisconsin PFAS Action Plan, visit https://widnr.widen.net/content/d4vyg9qqwj/pdf/EM_PFASActionPlan.pdf. Other sources of information regarding PFAS and what is being done:

- https://grist.org/accountability/lessons-pfas-water-small-wisconsin-town/?utm_medium=email&utm_source=newsletter&utm_campaign=weekly
- <https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/topic/PFAS> - WDNR
- <https://www.cleanwisconsin.org/our-work/water/pfas/> - Clean Wisconsin
- <https://apnews.com/article/wisconsin-lawsuits-madison-3m-co-5ebede47ca9ad4fa632a8a209db6be2a> - AP News

Menominee Conservation District Spring Tree & Plant Sale through March 15th

http://www.menomineecd.com/store/cl/Featured_Products.html



Hey, Marinette County residents - help our neighboring Menominee County, MI, with a purchase from their annual tree sales!

- Improve wildlife habitat
- Reforest the land
- Improve the environment
- Help fund Menominee Conservation District programming

Ordering is open until March 15th. Pick up is Friday April 28th, 1-5 pm & Saturday, April 29th, 9-noon at the Menominee County Road Commission Stephenson; and Saturday April 29th 10-noon at Tractor Supply Marinette.



Various conifers, deciduous, & fruit trees, as well as shrubs for wildlife, asparagus and seed mixes are available for sale:

- Red & White Pine
- White Cedar
- Spruces: Norway, Blue & White
- Balsam Fir
- Oaks – Red, White (above), Bur
- Maples – Sugar & Red
- Black Cherry & Walnut
- White Birch
- Various apple, plum, & pear varieties
- Various blueberry varieties
- Shrubs: dogwoods, lilac, chokecherry, highbush cranberry, & ninebark

THIS IS THE MAGIC OF NATIVE PLANTS



Prunus Serotina Black Cherry Tree

Supports The Lifecycles Of Up To 456

Moths, Caterpillars and Butterflies and 33 species of birds

(numbers vary depending on North American location)

NATIVE RANGE IN GREEN



Exotic Plants Can't Do This

pollinator friendly yards on facebook



Grow Native Ornamental Grasses for Birds and Butterflies

<https://www.birdsandblooms.com/birding/attracting-birds/plants-and-trees-that-attract-birds/growing-ornamental-grass/>



Prairie dropseed grasses and purple coneflowers

Native ornamental grasses are full of life. They sway in the wind, bow beneath snow and rustle with a music all their own throughout the seasons. Keep an eye on those graceful clumps, and you'll see life of another kind, too. Birds and butterflies love them. Native sparrows, finches and other small birds forage for seeds from grasses in the garden, just as they do in the wild. And more than 100 butterfly species, especially skippers, use certain grasses as host plants.



With so many kinds of ornamental grasses on the market, and new ones joining them every year, how's a gardener to know which ones are best for birds and butterflies? It's simple, really. *Grow native grasses!*

Native Grasses to Attract Birds

Birds visit all North American native grasses, thanks to the bounty of nutritious morsels on the plumes, spikes or sprays. For juncos, native sparrows, buntings and other seed-eating birds, it doesn't matter what part of the country the grass is originally from. Many natives, such as switchgrass (below), big bluestem and Indian grass, are already garden favorites as ornamentals, both in their original form and in variations like the Heavy Metal cultivar, which is a cool blue-gray.



Don't expect to see your ornamental grasses bowing under a flock of feeding goldfinches, though. Instead, look for finches, native sparrows, juncos, doves and other birds on the ground beneath the plants in fall and winter, stretching for overhanging seed heads or scratching for fallen seeds.

Grasses for Nesting Birds and Butterflies

In spring, when nesting season arrives, any and all grasses may be the focus of birds' attention. Dead grass, that is. Dry grass is lightweight, plentiful, easy to maneuver around and a cinch to collect. Birds aren't fussy about what they use in their nests, as long as it's strong and flexible.

Robins, song sparrows, wrens and other birds use coarse grass blades for the main wall of the nest. The dead leaves of other fine-textured grasses often serve as part of the soft inner cirlet that lines the nest.

Native grasses come into their glory as summer arrives, and that's when delightful grass skipper butterflies take an interest in them, too. This big subfamily includes about 140 species, all with a definite predilection for grasses as host plants.



Big Bluestem above; below, little bluestem (taller bluish grass) and prairie dropseed tucked into a pollinator garden, shown in late September

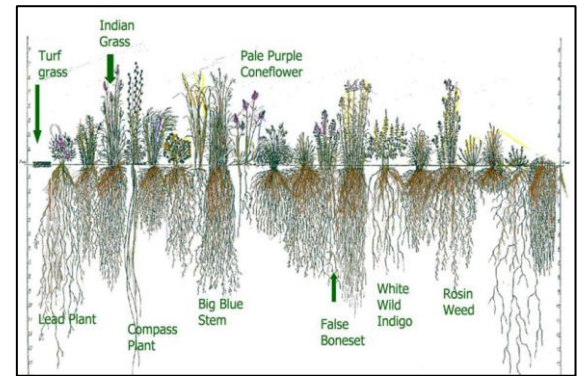


So go ahead and grow grasses to your backyard. Fall is still a good time to plant them. You'll be well on your way to attracting even more birds and butterflies to your space.

9 Native Ornamental Grasses

- Big bluestem (*Andropogon gerardii*)
- Blue grama grass (*Bouteloua gracilis*)
- Indian rice grass (*Achnatherum hymenoides*)
- Little bluestem (*Schizachyrium scoparium*)
- Muhly grass (*Muhlenbergia* spp.)
- Northern sea oats (*Chasmanthium latifolium*)
- Prairie dropseed (*Sporobolus heterolepis*)
- Sideoats grama (*Bouteloua curtipendula*)
- Switchgrass (*Panicum virgatum*)

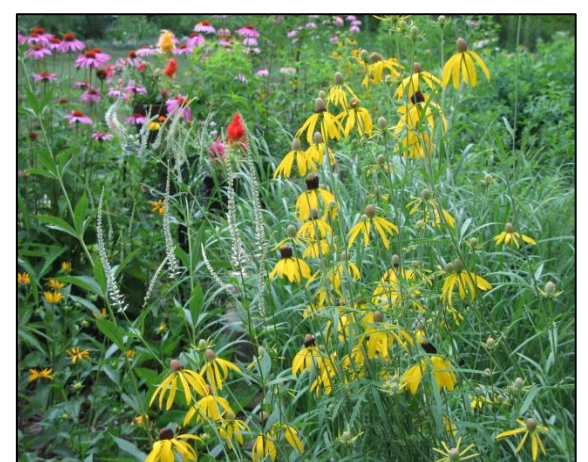
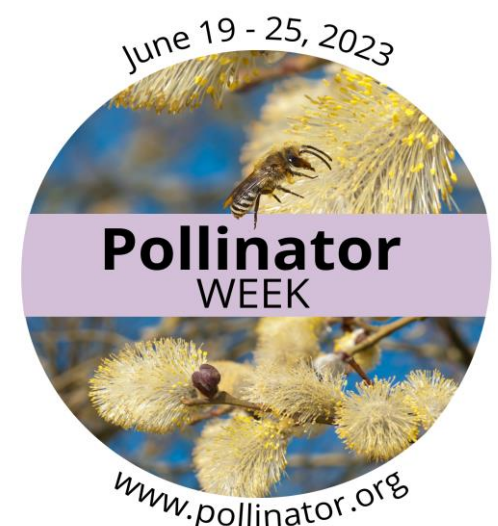
Native grasses and other native plants also have deeper root systems, so you don't have to water them much or be concerned about drier conditions throughout the summer (see the root depth image at top of next column).



For more about native grasses, how they benefit wildlife, what species are optimal for your growing conditions, etc. visit these websites:

- <https://wisconsinpollinators.com/Articles/NativeGrasses.aspx>
- <https://www.swimga.org/swimga-gardens/native-grass-garden/>
- <https://nativeplantherald.prairienursery.com/2016/09/native-grasses-the-tall-and-short-of-it/>
- <https://arboretum.wisc.edu/news/arboretum-news/gardening-with-native-plants-short-native-grasses-and-forbs-for-small-gardens/>
- <https://dyckarboretum.org/native-grasses-help-pollinators/>
- <https://thewoodlandtownshipblog-environment.com/2021/11/12/5-beautiful-pollinator-friendly-grasses-for-spectacular-fall-interest/>

And, Pollinator Week is coming up in June, so now is the time to start planning your pollinator & wildlife habitat!



Northwoods Journal Online

Would you like to read current issues of the *Northwoods Journal* online? Go to www.marinettecounty.com and search for "Northwoods Journal". We can also send you an e-mail reminder when each new issue is posted online. Contact Anne Bartels, Information & Education Specialist at 715-732-7784 or email anne.bartels@marinettecountywi.gov.



2023 Wisconsin Lakes & Rivers Convention in April

<https://wisconsinwaterweek.org/home/lakes-and-rivers-convention/>



The Wisconsin Lakes & Rivers Convention is back again for 2023, on April 19-21. The gathering of over 500 lake & stream lovers – from private citizens to government & state agency officials to academics – will convene at the Stevens Point Holiday Inn & Convention Center for three jam-packed days of workshops, field trips, engaging talks, thought-provoking discussion, networking, and fun.

This year’s theme is “Building Trust Around Water Together.” Trust is an important part of our everyday lives. We usually have trust in our family members, friends, neighbors, health care professionals, teachers, and so many others in our communities. Trust is something that is earned and is also something that can be lost.

During this event, we invite you to build new relationships with individuals, groups, businesses, and organizations. Let’s cultivate trust together so we can better collaborate and cooperate around the lakes, in our watersheds, and across Wisconsin. We also invite you to explore Wisconsin’s unique Public Trust Doctrine, based on our state’s constitutional provision “that navigable waters are held in trust by the state for the benefit of the public.”



This year we’ll be joined by invited guests EPA Division 5 administrator, Debra Shore; WI Dept of Natural Resources Secretary Adam Payne, and Dr. John Francis, Planetwalker, along with numerous other presenters. **Learn** from respected experts, grassroots organizers, and passionate water advocates. **Engage** in the workshops and interactive discussion sessions. **Enhance** your network of water-focused professionals.



In-Person Convention
Three days filled with more than 50 concurrent sessions, 20 workshops, special technical sessions, keynote speakers, lightning talks, a poster session, Lake and River Stewardship Awards Ceremony and Banquet, Welcome Reception, lunches, breaks, and educational materials! Not to mention a great opportunity to network with professionals, citizen scientists, and other water lovers!

Virtual Convention
Two days including keynote speakers, select concurrent sessions (yet to be determined), and the ability to interact with exhibitors, presenters and other attendees.

Costs
Below are cost estimates for in-person vs. virtual attendance. Registration will close one week before the event to finalize food counts. Please register before April 12 (see website above to register).

In-Person Convention

Save 20% if you register before March 1, 2023!

Wednesday, April 19

Half-Day Workshops* (AM and/or PM).....\$40

Half-Day Field Trips.....TBD

Lunch.....\$15

*Some workshops may have an additional materials fee.

Thursday, April 20

Keynote speaker, 35+ sessions, lunch.....\$125

Stewardship Banquet/Awards Ceremony.....\$35

Friday, April 21

Keynote speaker, 35+ sessions, lunch.....\$100

Students receive 50% off.

Must be enrolled at a K-12 school or accredited institution of higher education.

Virtual Convention

Save 20% if you register before March 1, 2023!

Thursday, April 20

Limited concurrent sessions including keynote speaker.....\$50

Friday, April 21

Limited concurrent sessions including keynote speaker.....\$50

Students receive 50% off.

Must be enrolled at a K-12 school or accredited institution of higher education.



Meet the Northern Flicker!

<https://obdk.com/blogs/obdk-blog>



The Northern Flicker is a woodpecker species that is unique from other woodpecker species. This is because it will forage on the ground for food instead of just getting it from pecking into trees.

These birds can be found in grassland and woodland habitats but can also be found in towns. They can be found at suet feeders during the winter. Their main source of food tends to be ants and beetles, but they’ll also eat seeds.

They stand almost a foot tall with a wingspan of anywhere between 16 and 20 inches. They have black spots on their fronts and backs, and when they expand their wings the inner parts of their wings may be yellow or red - this depends on where they live. Those that live in the eastern part of North America will have yellow feathers (below), while those that live in the west will have red feathers.



When it comes to mating, males will try to impress the females and will face off against other males as they display their moves for the female. Males and females have different appearances. Male Northern Flickers have a black or red mark on their faces, while females lack that mark. When they pair up and excavate a nest, they’ll work together on it.



Map from <https://www.audubon.org/field-guide/bird/northern-flicker>



2023 Great Lakes Conference - The Great Lakes: Managing Fisheries and Exploring Islands

<https://www.canr.msu.edu/iwr/events/annual-great-lakes-conference>



Join the 33rd Annual Great Lakes conference virtually to learn about issues affecting the Great Lakes on Tuesday, March 7 from 9:30 a.m. to 3:45 p.m. (eastern time). It is free to attend, but registration is required. Register online at: bit.ly/greatlakes2023. Conference will take place online through Zoom.

The conference will feature two themes with three presentations per theme as well as a panel discussion with Q/A from participants. The themes are *Fisheries Management in the Great Lakes* and *Great Lakes Islands*. The day will also feature a presentation on PFAS in Great Lakes Fish.

More information, as well as a complete agenda can be found on the conference website. For questions, contact [Lois Wolfson](mailto:Lois.Wolfson@msu.edu), 517-230-9281, wolfson1@msu.edu.

The conference is sponsored by Michigan State University Department of Fisheries and Wildlife, Institute of Water Research, Michigan Sea Grant Extension, Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy, and MSU Extension. Support is provided by US Geological Survey Water Resources Research Program.



Conference Agenda

9:30: Welcome and Introduction – Heather Triezenberg, Michigan Sea Grant

9:45: Fisheries Management in the Great Lakes – Jim Bence, Department of Fisheries and Wildlife, Michigan State University

- Management of Salmon and Trout in Lake Michigan - Jay Wesley, Fisheries Division, Lake Michigan Basin Coordinator, Michigan Department of Natural Resources
- Agency Cooperation and Sustainable Management of Lake Erie's Walleye Fisheries - Matt Faust, Ohio Division of Wildlife, Sandusky Fisheries Research Station, Sandusky, Ohio
- Sturgeon Management in the Great Lakes - Justin Chiotti, US Fish and Wildlife Service, Detroit River Substation, Gibraltar



11:15: Panel Discussion

11:45: Lunch Break

1:00: PFAS in Lake Michigan Fish - Daniele Miranda, Departments of Physics and Biological Sciences, University of Notre Dame, Notre Dame, IN



1:45 - Great Lakes Islands – Bretton Joldersma, Water Resources Division, Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy

- The Great Lakes Islands Initiative – Working with Communities – Matt Preisser, GLIA Coordinator, Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes and Energy (EGLE), Lansing
- Remote Great Lakes Island Surveys: Notable Discoveries and Prioritization Schema for Biodiversity Stewardship – Josh Cohen, Michigan Natural Features Inventory (MNFI), Michigan State University Extension, Lansing
- Anecdotal success stories about sustainable island communities - Peter Huston, Great Lakes Islands Alliance, Stewardship Network

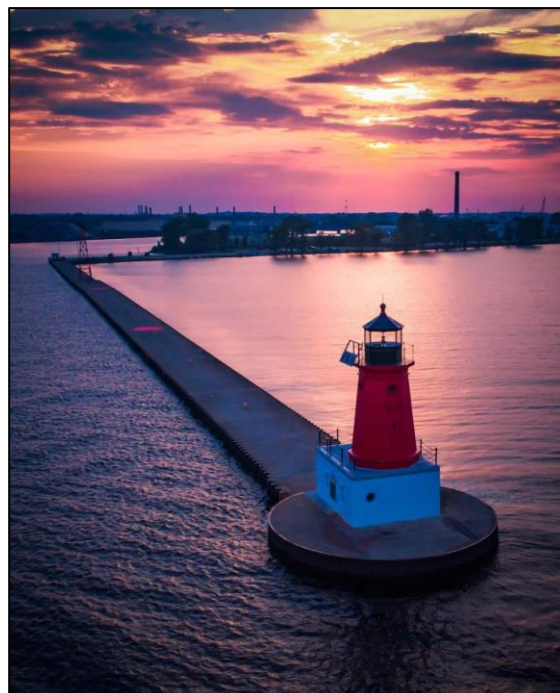


Photo from Great Lakes Islands Alliance, <https://glialliance.org/>

3:15 - Panel Discussion

3:45 – Adjourn

Visit the website to view presentations from the 2021 and 2022 virtual conferences.



Fish And Wildlife Spring Hearings Happening Virtually April 10-13

<https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/newsroom/release/66766>



The Wisconsin Conservation Congress (WCC) and Department of Natural Resources (DNR) invite the public to get involved in April during the annual spring hearing public input opportunity.

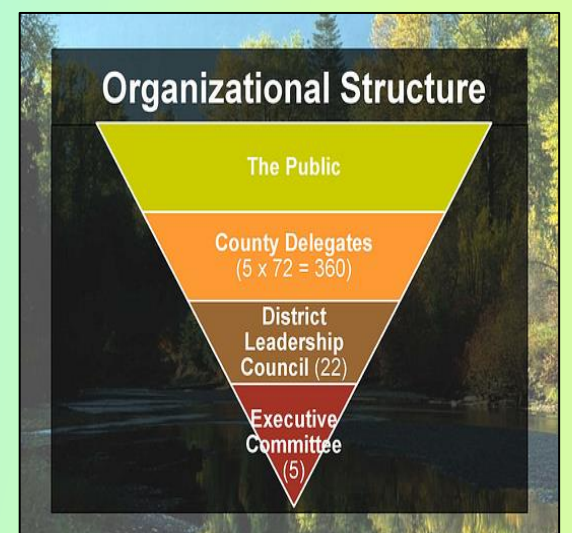
The WCC/DNR Spring Hearings focus on natural resource-related questions and proposed rule changes. They will again be held in a virtual format, as they have been since 2020. This year's online questionnaire will be open from April 10 at noon through April 13 at noon via the [Wisconsin Conservation Congress Spring Hearing webpage](https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/newsroom/release/66766).

New this year will be open houses in each county to allow the public to ask questions and learn about resource management in their neck of the woods. Open houses will be held from April 3 through April 6. More details will be made available on the [DNR's Events Calendar](https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/newsroom/release/66766) and [Spring Hearing webpage](https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/newsroom/release/66766) as soon as details are finalized.

DNR staff and WCC delegates will be on hand at these open houses to discuss local issues of importance, answer questions from the public and open a dialogue between the public, the DNR and the WCC about areas of interest and concern.

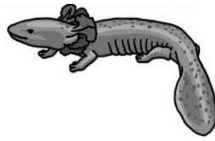
In addition, the WCC will hold elections for their delegates at each of these open houses. Two of the five WCC seats will be up for election in each county.

The Wisconsin Conservation Congress is the only statutory body in the state where the public elects delegates to advise the Natural Resources Board and the DNR on responsibly managing Wisconsin's natural resources for present and future generations. The Congress accomplishes this through open, impartial, broad-ranged actions. Learn more about the WCC and how to become involved in resource management decisions on the [Wisconsin Conservation webpage](https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/newsroom/release/66766).



Slimy but Sweet - Searching for Mudpuppies in Wisconsin

<https://www.wisconservation.org/mudpuppies-in-wisconsin/>



After years of fundraising, the fund made its first distribution in 2022, leveraged with matching funds for a total grant of \$5,000 to the Wisconsin DNR to support the mudpuppy research and conservation project.

Why do amphibians and reptiles need our help?

Populations have declined in Wisconsin due to habitat loss, the illegal pet trade, and road collisions, while new threats like emerging diseases and climate change are compounding these issues. Amphibian and reptile species have unique life history, behavior, diet, and habitat needs, which makes them more vulnerable than other species to change.

That's why the Natural Resources Foundation of Wisconsin created the [Wisconsin Amphibian and Reptile Conservation Fund](#) - to provide lasting support for Wisconsin's most threatened and endangered species, including:

- Blanchard's Cricket Frog
- Eastern Massasauga Rattlesnake
- Ornate Box Turtle
- Queensnake
- Slender Glass Lizard
- Eastern Ribbonsnake
- Western Ribbonsnake
- Wood Turtle

What will this fund do? Grants from the fund will support critical projects including:

- ✓ Supporting on-the-ground conservation and research to better understand and protect ornate box turtles, eastern massasauga rattlesnakes, and other endangered species.
- ✓ Restoring native habitats where high numbers of rare amphibians and reptiles are found, such as river bluffs and sand prairies.
- ✓ Training citizen scientists to monitor Wisconsin's rare and threatened amphibians and reptiles, helping to inform conservation efforts.
- ✓ Launching education and outreach efforts to teach children and adults about Wisconsin's amphibians and reptiles.

For more about the mudpuppy and its habitats, visit:

- ✓ <https://fishncanada.com/mudpuppy-ice-fishings-most-confusing-by-catch/>



- ✓ <https://dnr.wi.gov/topic/EndangeredResources/Animals.asp?mode=detail&SpecCode=AAAAE01042>
- ✓ <https://www.dnr.state.mn.us/eco/mcbs/mudpuppy.html>



Wisconsin's only fully aquatic salamander, the mudpuppy, is at risk of decline across the state. New funding from the NRF's Wisconsin Amphibian and Reptile Conservation Fund is supporting a state-wide effort to learn more about these slimy amphibians.

Mudpuppies in Wisconsin Need Love, Too!

If you've spent time in Wisconsin's waters, you may have come close to encountering a unique amphibian: the mudpuppy. As **the only fully aquatic salamander in Wisconsin**, mudpuppies can be found in streams, rivers, ponds, and lakes all year-round. They prefer to spend time underneath flat rocks and woody debris.

Due to their behavior, searching for mudpuppies is challenging. Mudpuppies in Wisconsin have not been thoroughly studied, but scientists think their numbers may be declining. They are officially listed as a **"species with information needs."** Minnesota lists mudpuppies as a species of special concern, and Iowa and Illinois list the species as threatened.

The most likely time to see a mudpuppy this winter? While ice fishing. Mudpuppies can be a common bycatch during the winter ice-fishing season, and the [DNR is asking the public to report](#) any observations of mudpuppies they may catch while fishing this winter.

Searching for Mudpuppies

Thanks to the first distribution from NRF's Wisconsin Amphibian and Reptile Conservation Fund, a team of biologists from the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) are working to learn more about mudpuppy distribution across the state.

Surveys currently underway across the state have already located mudpuppies in multiple new locations. This time of year, the work involves sloshing through cold winter waters in waders.



DNR biologists search for mudpuppies in the Lower Wisconsin State Riverway, as part of an effort to learn more about their distribution across the state. This project was made possible thanks to the first distribution from the Wisconsin Amphibian and Reptile Conservation Fund.

The goal: learn more about where mudpuppies *used to* be found, and where they are *now*. This project will also develop and test various protocols for mudpuppy surveys, which will lead to more effective monitoring in the long term.



Above – a yearling mudpuppy; below, an adult – they can grow up to around 16" in Wisconsin.



"We have also been working to compile as much baseline mudpuppy data as we can get our hands on to document what we know about their distribution to compare to what we collect through this effort. We are scouring databases and doing press releases and social media outreach to have citizens submit records of mudpuppies they have encountered while ice fishing or through other means," says Rich Staffen, DNR conservation biologist.

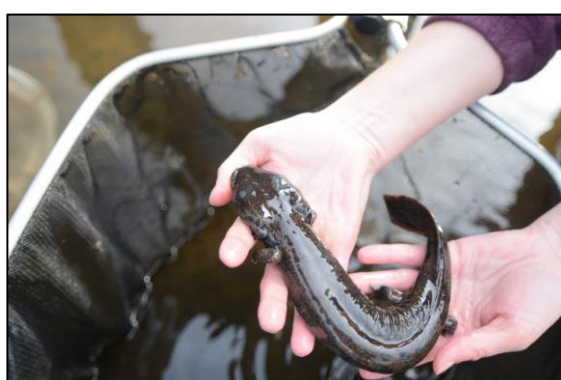


A close-up of a mudpuppy being held in a researcher's gloved hand.

Helping Wisconsin's Amphibians and Reptiles

Wisconsin is home to 55 species of amphibians and reptiles, half of which are endangered or at-risk. These animals are critically important to the health and balance of our ecosystems, yet limited funding is available to support their conservation.

The [Wisconsin Amphibian and Reptile Conservation Fund](#) was created by NRF in 2017 to show some love for our state's turtles, toads, frogs, lizards, snakes, and salamanders. The Fund provides ongoing support for conservation, education, research, and monitoring of Wisconsin's native and vulnerable amphibians and reptiles.



A researcher holding a mudpuppy over a net filled with water.



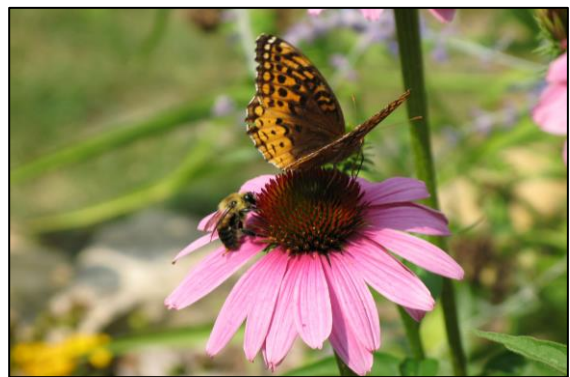
Gardening for Wildlife - Keystone Plants by Ecoregion

<https://www.nwf.org/Garden-for-Wildlife/About/Native-Plants/keystone-plants-by-ecoregion>

Native plants are core to the wildlife garden. Intentional use of [native plants](#), which have formed symbiotic relationships with native wildlife over millions of years, creates the most productive and sustainable wildlife habitat. While some plants play a singular role for one or limited types of wildlife, others are essential to the life cycle of many species.



The local species of these plants vary by **ecoregion** - areas where ecosystems (and the type, quality, and quantity of environmental resources) are generally similar. Keystone plant genera are unique to local food webs within ecoregions. Remove keystone plants and the diversity and abundance of many essential insect species, which 96% of terrestrial birds rely on for food sources, will be diminished. The ecosystem collapses in a similar way that the removal of the “key” stone in ancient Roman arch will trigger its demise.



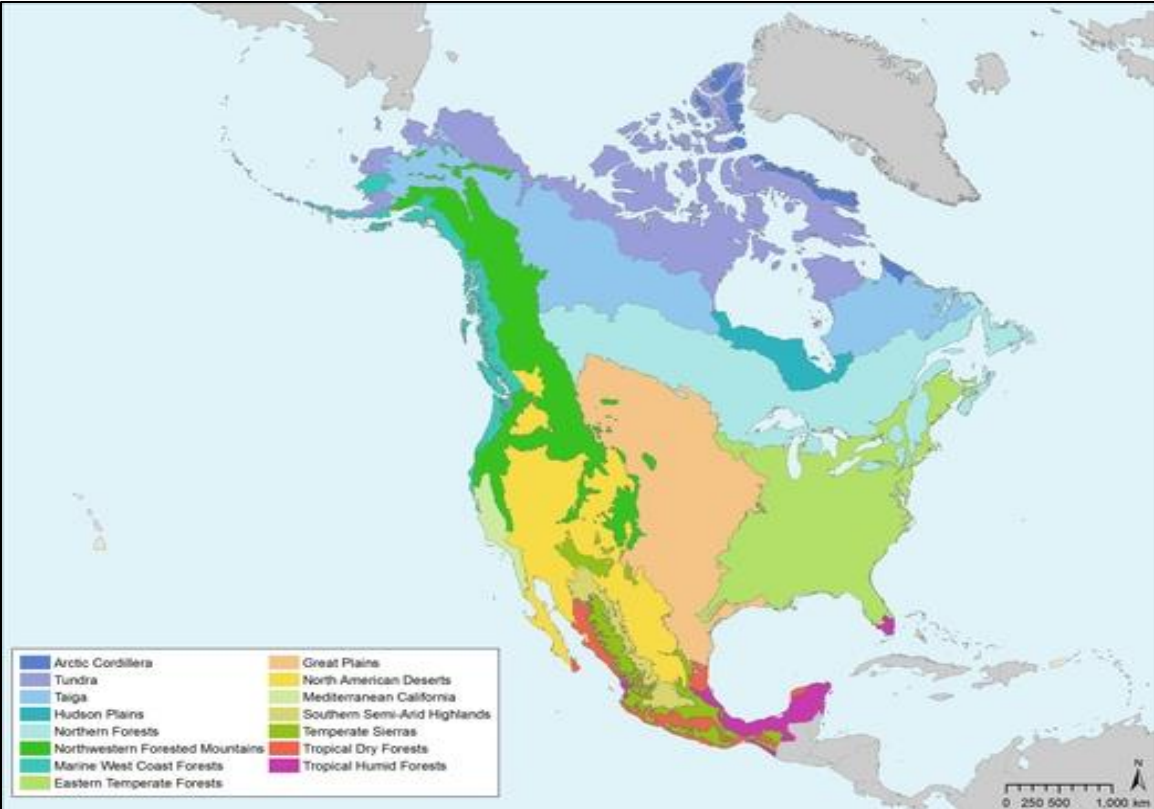
A bee and a fritillary butterfly on a purple coneflower

The research of entomologist, Dr. Doug Tallamy, and his team at the University of Delaware have identified 14% of native plants (the keystones) support 90% of butterfly and moth lepidoptera species. The research of horticulturist Jarrod Fowler has shown that 15% to 60% of North American native bee species are pollen specialists who only eat pollen from 40% of native plants.



A black swallowtail larva on Golden Alexanders, in the *Apiaceae* family which also includes parsley, parsnip and dill.

This data has been summarized by Level I Ecoregions along with top plants used by pollen specialist bees in the clickable lists below. In addition, approximately 4,000 genera of native plants that support over 11,000 lepidoptera can be sorted by zip code in [National Wildlife Federation’s Native Plant Finder](#).



Included on the lists are critical plant genera and local species that host significant numbers of butterflies, moths, and pollen specialist bees. Below are examples (plant genus in parentheses) from the list for ecoregion 9 - northern forests. Note that other parts of Wisconsin are also in ecoregion 8, temperate forests). For full plant lists, visit the title website.

Host plants feed caterpillars of approximately 90% of butterfly and moth species (*Lepidoptera*). **Specialist bees** depend on pollen from certain plants; note that other native bees also use these keystone plants.

Tree species (*genus*) & number of *Lepidoptera* species it supports:

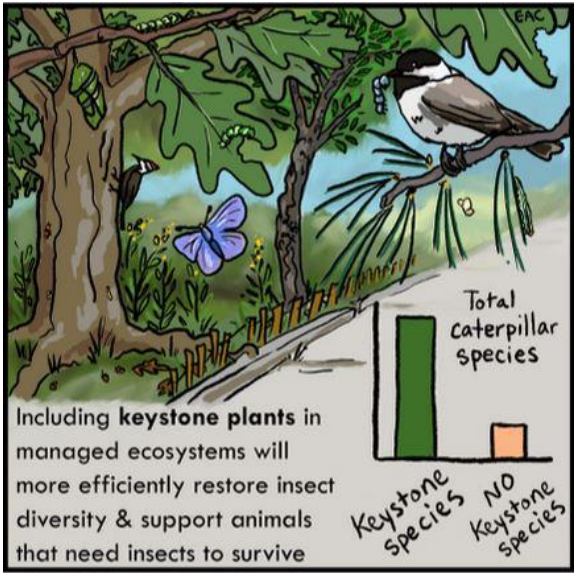
- Oaks (*Quercus*) – 445 species
- Black Cherry, Chokecherry, & American Plum (*Prunus*) – 409 species
- Birches (*Betula*) – 385 species
- Aspen & Balsam Poplar (*Populus*) – 337 species
- Maples (*Acer*) – 276 species
- Red & White Pine (*Pinus*) – 235 species
- Willows (*Salix*) – 397 species
- Basswood (*Tilia*) – 146 species
- Ashes (*Fraxinus*) – 133 species
- Walnut (*Juglans*) – 125 species
- Beech (*Fagus*) – 127 species
- Firs (*Abies*) – 116 species
- Larch (*Larix*) – 113 species
- Hemlock (*Tsuga*) – 110 species
- Viburnums – 102 species

Shrubs:

- Cranberry, blueberry (*Vaccinium*) – 276 species & 6 species specialist bees
- Black & raspberry (*Rubus*) – 153 species
- Dogwoods (*Cornus*) – 116 species & 4 species specialist bees
- Serviceberry (*Amelanchier*) - 113 species

Flowering Perennials:

- Goldenrods (*Solidago*) – 120 species & 22 species specialist bees
- Asters (*Symphyotrichum*) – 9 species & 16 species specialist bees
- Sunflowers (*Helianthus*) – 53 species & 22 species specialist bees
- Black & brown-eyed susans, green coneflowers (*Rudbeckia*) - 14 species & 17 species specialist bees
- *Coreopsis* (sand, lanceleaf, prairie) - 9 species specialist bees
- Yellow & prairie coneflowers (*Ratibida*), Ironweed (*Veronia*) - 5 species specialist bees
- Prairie clover (*Dalea*), Coneflower (*Echinacea*) – 3 species specialist bees
- Blanketflower (*Gaillardia*) & Lupine (*Lupinus*) - 2 species specialist bees



Native plants have formed symbiotic relationships with native wildlife over thousands of years, and therefore offer the most sustainable habitat. A plant is considered native if it has occurred naturally in a particular region, ecosystem, or habitat without human introduction.



Monarch larva on common milkweed

Exotic plants that evolved in other parts of the world or were cultivated by humans into forms that don’t exist in nature do not support wildlife as well as native plants. Occasionally, they can even escape into the wild and become invasive exotics that destroy natural habitat.

Native plants help the environment the most when planted in places that match their growing requirements. They will thrive in the soils, moisture and weather of your region. That means less supplemental watering, which can be wasteful, and pest problems that require toxic chemicals. Native plants also assist in managing rain water runoff and maintain healthy soil as their root systems are deep and keep soil from being compacted.

For more about native plants, visit:

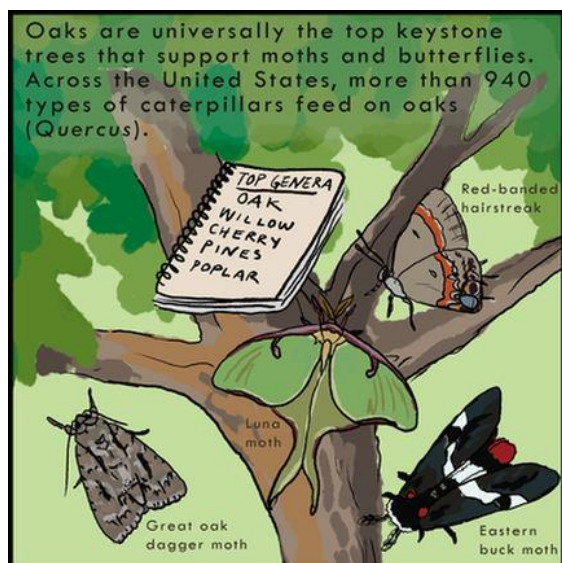
- ✓ <https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/topic/endanger edresources/nativeplants.html>
- ✓ <https://xerces.org/pollinator- conservation/pollinator-friendly-plant- lists>



“Soft Landings” – Providing Habitat for Beneficial Insects

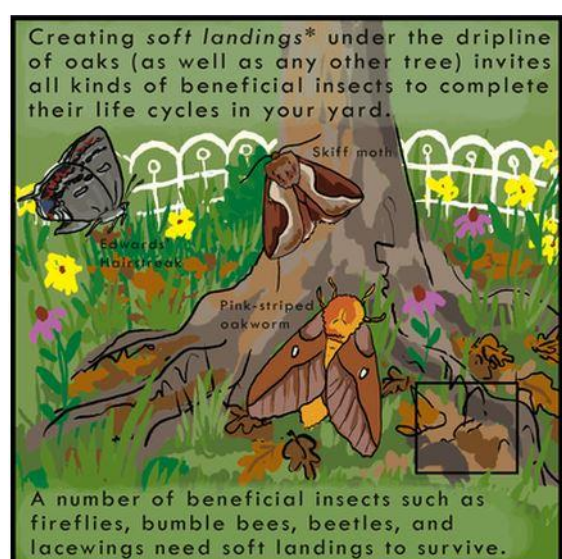
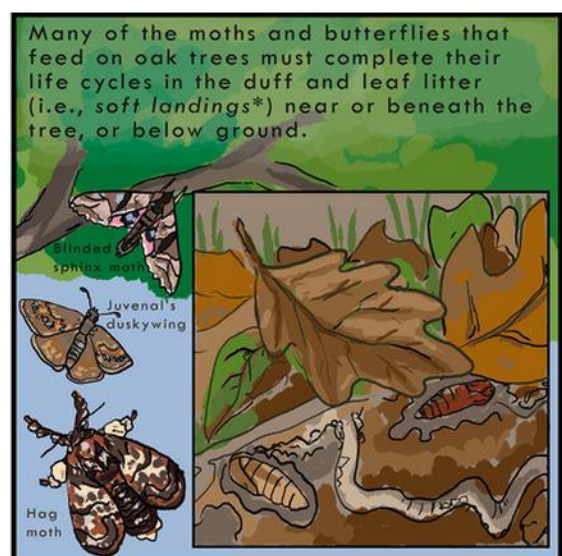
<https://www.pollinatorsnativeplants.com/softlandings.html>

Soft landings are diverse native plantings under keystone trees (or any other regionally appropriate native tree). These plantings provide critical shelter and habitat for one or more life cycle stages of moths, butterflies, and beneficial insects such as bumble bees, fireflies, lacewings, and beetles. In addition to plants, *soft landings* also include leaf litter, duff, and plant debris.



The Problem

After feeding on native tree foliage, many moth and butterfly caterpillars spend their next life cycle stage (pupae) in the leaf litter or in the soil below the tree. Regularly mowed turf grass under trees (below) lacks the necessary habitat for these important insects to complete their life cycles. Frequent mowing also leads to compacted soil.

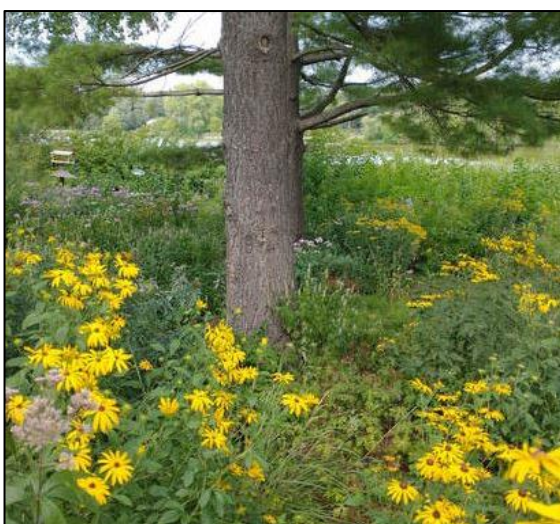


The Solution – Soft Landing Plantings

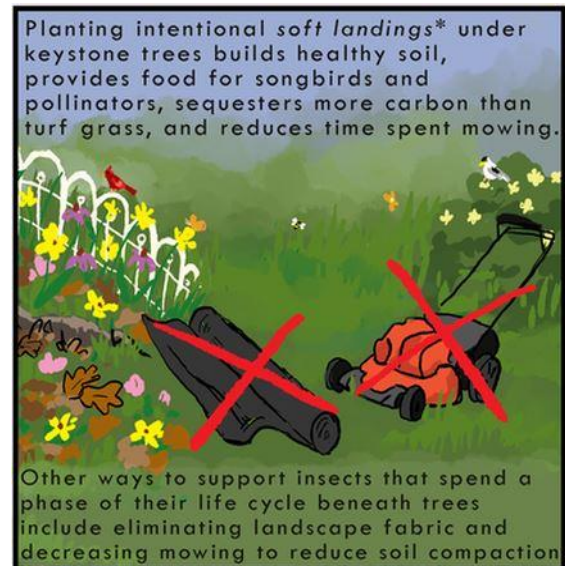
Planting intentional soft landings under keystone trees (or any regionally appropriate native tree) builds healthy soil, provides food for songbirds and pollinators, sequesters more carbon than turf grass, and reduces time spent mowing.

Tips for Creating your Soft Landings

- *Protect the health of your tree.* Many trees have shallow roots so you need to be careful and avoid damaging the tree while planting. Buy small plants (plugs or cell packs) and use a small trowel to carefully dig the holes.
- *Avoid using a shovel or digging large or deep holes.* Alternatively, the area can be seeded once competing undesirable vegetation is removed.
- *Stay away from the tree trunk.* Avoid planting within three feet of the tree trunk to prevent damaging the primary roots and root flares. Plants will fill this void once established. Keep natural materials - leaves, twigs, and plant debris away from the trunk of the tree to avoid excess moisture leading to bark rot.



- *Smother existing vegetation or turf – do not dig out the existing turfgrass under the tree.* You could damage the roots and trunk in the process. If you still have turf under the tree, in autumn, smother the turf by laying cardboard on the turf, then add a thick layer of leaves and small branches to hold it in place. Your soft landings will be ready to plant the following spring!
- *Enhance what you already have.* If you already have plants growing under the tree, remove any invasive or undesirable non-native plants and augment the planting with new native plants.
- *Start building the duff & leaf litter layer.* In autumn, rake excess leaves into the soft landings or dripline of the tree. Weigh down the leaves with small branches. Do



not add any soil or compost on the root system of the tree. Tree root systems are 'lungs' and need to be able to breathe! Cover the soil under trees with natural - materials leaves, twigs, and plant debris.

- *Don't create a raised bed under the tree.* It is important not to add additional soil or compost (create a raised bed with or without edging) in your soft landing. Adding soil on top of the tree's root system may affect the health of the tree. Add leaf litter, bark, and small branches or twigs to build soil health and a duff layer under the tree.

Examples of soft landings plants include:

- Interrupted & ostrich ferns
- Wild Geranium
- Common violets
- Bloodroot
- Wild blue phlox
- Jacob's ladder
- Bishop's cap
- Poke milkweed
- Large-flowered bellwort
- Virginia Waterleaf
- Pennsylvania & Eastern star sedge



USDA Invests More than \$48.6 Million to Manage Risks, Combat Climate Change

Excerpts from: <https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/news/usda-invests-more-than-486-million-to-manage-risks-combat-climate-change>

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) will invest more than \$48.6 million this year through the [Joint Chiefs' Landscape Restoration Partnership](#) for projects that mitigate wildfire risk, improve water quality, restore forest ecosystems, and ultimately contribute to USDA's efforts to combat climate change. This year, the USDA Forest Service and Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) will invest in projects, including 14 new projects – **one in northeastern WI** – bringing together agricultural producers, forest landowners, and National Forest System lands to improve forest health using available Farm Bill conservation programs and other authorities.



The Joint Chiefs' Landscape Restoration Partnership enables the Forest Service and NRCS to collaborate with agricultural producers and forest landowners to invest in conservation and restoration at a large enough scale to make a difference. Working in partnership, and at this scale, helps reduce wildfire threats to communities and critical infrastructure, protect water quality and supply, and improve wildlife habitat for at-risk species.

Climate Vulnerabilities



NRCS Chief Terry Cosby added: "These Joint Chiefs' projects are excellent examples of how federal, state, and local agencies can use targeted funding to achieve results that meet producers' conservation goals, build drought resiliency, and mitigate climate change. Through collaboration and strategic investments in local communities, we continue to work with the Forest Service to respond to significant conservation needs on private and public lands." USDA is investing \$17.4 million in these 14 new projects:

- Arizona, Fort Huachuca Sentinel Landscape Phase Two
- Arkansas and Oklahoma, Arklaoma Ozark Watershed Restoration
- California, Forest Health and Fire Resilient Rural Communities Phase Three
- Guam, Making Southern Guam Firewise and Wildfire Resistant
- Idaho, South Teton Valley Hazardous Fuels Removal
- Illinois, Cross-Boundary Upland Oak Restoration
- Montana, Elkhorn Cooperative Management Area
- New Jersey, New Jersey Pine Barrens Restoration
- North Dakota, Badlands Restoration Phase Two
- Oregon, North Wasco All Lands
- Oregon, Southern Blues Restoration
- Pennsylvania, Allegheny Plateau Habitat Restoration
- South Carolina, Piedmont Watershed Restoration
- **Wisconsin, Northeast Wisconsin Forestry and Wildlife Partnership**



Through the new three-year projects, landowners will work with local USDA experts and partners to apply targeted forestry management practices on their land, such as thinning, hazardous fuel treatments, fire breaks, and other systems to meet unique forestry challenges in their area. Additionally, USDA is investing \$31.2 million in 25 existing projects. For full project descriptions and information on completed projects, visit the [Joint Chiefs' webpage](#). Below is more about the project in Wisconsin, of which Marinette County is a partner.

Wisconsin - Northeast Wisconsin Forestry and Wildlife Partnership

- Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest
- Counties: Florence, Forest, Langlade, Marinette, Menominee, Oconto, Oneida, & Shawano
- Congressional District 07 and 08

This project will address wildfire threats, water quality, and wildlife habitat by removing down wood, treating invasive species in disturbed areas, and establishing trees as necessary. Water quality projects include improving aquatic organism passage, stream crossings, riparian forest buffers, and maintaining shade on streams in black ash wetlands threatened by emerald ash borer.

Wildlife objectives include habitat creation for near threatened golden-winged warbler (below) and critically imperiled monarch butterflies. Brook trout are also a focus and will benefit from improved water quality.



Forest projects will focus on ash management, oak wilt, and sustainable forestry practices across other forest types, to enhance wildlife habitat, water quality and climate resilience.

Community benefits will include reduction in fire risk, improvements to water quality and wildlife habitat, and more resilient forests. Working in coordination with the Wisconsin Tribal Conservation Advisory Council, treatments have been designed to beneficially impact Tribal lands. These restoration actions will bring in more travelers to the area and will also sustain the local forest products industry.

Total FY23 Funding Request: \$690,140
Partners: American Bird Conservancy, American Woodcock Society, Lumberjack Resource Conservation and Development Council, Marinette County Land Information Department, My Wisconsin Woods, Northwoods Land Trust, Ruffed Grouse Society, Trout Unlimited, University of Wisconsin Extension, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, Wisconsin Tribal Conservation Advisory Council, Wisconsin Woodland Owners Association, & Wisconsin Young Forest Partnership.

USDA Opens People's Garden Initiative to Gardens Nationwide

<https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/news/usda-opens-peoples-garden-initiative-to-gardens-nationwide>



School gardens, community gardens, urban farms, and small-scale agriculture projects in rural, suburban and urban areas can be recognized as a "People's Garden" if they register on the USDA website and meet criteria including benefitting the community, working collaboratively, incorporating conservation practices and educating the public.

About the Gardens

USDA originally launched the People's Garden Initiative in 2009. It's named for the "People's Department," former President Abraham Lincoln's nickname for USDA, which was established during his presidency in 1862. People's Gardens grow fresh, healthy food and support resilient, local food systems; teach people how to garden using conservation practices; nurture habitat for pollinators and wildlife and create greenspace for neighbors.



How to Register

To learn more about People's Garden or to register one, visit the People's Garden webpage at [The People's Garden | USDA](#). The location and information on each garden will be displayed on a map. USDA will send a "People's Garden" sign to each garden and invite continued engagement through photos and information sharing. Gardens on federal property, such as USDA offices, are required to donate produce. We invite these gardens to report how much is being donated.

To be eligible, gardens:

- **Benefit the community** by providing food, green space, wildlife habitat, education space.
- **Are a collaborative effort.** This can include groups working together with USDA agencies, food banks, after school programs, Girl Scouts, Master Gardeners, conservation districts, etc.
- **Incorporate conservation management practices**, such as using native plant species, rain barrels, integrated pest management, xeriscaping.
- **Educate the public** about sustainable gardening practices and the importance of local, diverse, and resilient food systems providing healthy food for the community.

More Information

The People's Garden Initiative is part of USDA's broader efforts to advance equity, support local and regional food systems and access to food, and encourage use of conservation and climate-smart practices.



The Wisconsin Young Forest Project

<https://www.wiyoungforest.org/> & <https://youngforest.org/wisconsin/wisconsin-young-forest-partnership>



The Wisconsin Young Forest Partnership advocates and promotes management for young forest habitat on public and private forestland. The Wisconsin Young Forest Partnership (WYFP) is made up of federal and state agencies, wildlife and forestry organizations, timber companies, and private landowners that have joined forces to bring more young forest to the Badger State.

Wisconsin Young Forest Partnership seeks to achieve landscape-scale conservation in Wisconsin for high priority species by:

- Collaborating with like-minded partners
- Promoting and creating young forest habitat through active forest management
- And providing technical and financial assistance to private forestland owners

"This is not an effort to cut old growth forest or to convert stands of northern hardwood to faster-growing aspen with an eye toward creating forest products," says Amber Roth, a habitat biologist with the Golden-Winged Warbler Working Group. "Instead, our goal is to educate and engage landowners who are not currently managing their forested lands, so that they'll consider all of their management options and, we hope, decide to make and enhance young forest for wildlife in appropriate places."



WYFP partners agree to "identify, promote, and deliver conservation programs that assist landowners with land management through the use of combined resources between agencies, organizations and companies." That kind of cooperation will pay dividends for the wild creatures that depend on young forest, also known as "early successional habitat."

What is a 'young forest'?

Any forest that has had most of its older, mature trees removed and replaced with seedlings or saplings is considered young, even if it has been covered with trees for hundreds of years. Trees may be removed through natural forest disturbances — like a tornado, windstorm, or wildfire — or forest management techniques such as a timber harvest or prescribed fire to mimic these natural processes.



The first trees and plants to grow are usually highly productive, fast growing, intolerant of shade, and usually short-lived than shade-tolerant species. Species that fall under this young forest category are aspen, birch, jack pine, alder, and oak.

Young forest is important to a wide range of game and non-game wildlife such as a multitude of migratory and resident bird species, ruffed grouse, woodcock, white tailed deer, black bears, rabbit and hare. Its dense cover brings vertical structure and protection for nesting, feeding, and brood rearing. The young vegetation provides a variety of seeds, berries, and nuts while it also attracts insects valuable for foraging wildlife.

Why Focus on it?

Forest inventory work over the years has told us that Wisconsin's young forest habitat is on a decline due to less disturbances on the landscape. The suppression of natural disasters plus the public resistance to intensive timber harvests results in forests that are maturing. Mature forest has its value, but it does not provide usable habitat for species who specialize in young forest habitat. As a result, wildlife scientists have noted that American woodcock and golden-winged warbler numbers have declined by more than 50% across the species ranges in recent decades.

Wisconsin Young Forest Partnership Timeline:

- 2007 — the Upper Great Lakes Young Forest Initiative created young forest habitat goals.
- 2011 — WI DNR saw a need for an outreach program to educate private landowners about young forest management and benefits to wildlife.
- 2014 — Agencies and organizations came together to form the Wisconsin Young Forest Partnership with a common goal to establish a landscape-scale conservation approach that can deliver young forest habitat on suitable lands across Wisconsin, regardless of ownership.

For more information about getting involved, resources, and to help improve your forest property habitat, visit <https://www.wiyoungforest.org/start> or contact WYFP directly (below).



Phone: (715) 966-5160
Email: WIYoungForest@gmail.com
Address:
315 S. Oneida Ave. Suite 206
Rhineland, WI 54501

Beavers and their Amazing Teeth

<https://www.facebook.com/piedmontnaturalhistory>



Have you ever wondered how Beavers (*Castor canadensis*) can chew on trees yet their teeth don't break or wear down? As you might imagine, beavers have several adaptations to prevent this.

First, they have an orange layer on the anterior surface of their front teeth (incisors). Why is this? The orange color comes from iron within the enamel of the teeth. You have hard enamel covering your teeth too, but the much higher iron content of beaver enamel gives it additional strength and durability. Many other rodents have an iron-rich enamel on the front of their incisors too. That's how rats chew through metal pipes and other hard surfaces.

Second, beavers and other rodents have front teeth (incisors) that never stop growing. Thus, as they chew on trees and eat bark, any wear is eventually replaced by new growth.



This Beaver skull has been cut in half lengthwise down the middle (a mid-sagittal section in anatomy). Notice the orange, iron-rich enamel on the front of each incisor and their long, continuously growing shape extending back into the skull and lower jaw. The sharp chisel tip is maintained as the white dentin wears down faster than the harder, iron-rich enamel.

Lastly, beaver teeth stay sharp because the iron-rich enamel on the front of their incisors wears down more slowly than the softer dentin material behind it. This allows their incisors to maintain a sharp chisel tip.



Notice the paired grooves made by the Beaver's incisors. When chewing, the beaver anchors its upper incisors in the wood and then pare off wood by "chewing" with their lower incisor. The thin, sharp edge of the orange enamel does the cutting. This orange outer layer of iron-enriched enamel is only around 12 millionths of a meter thick, but it is extremely hard and durable.



DNR Now Accepting Artwork for the 2024 Turkey, Pheasant and Waterfowl Stamp Contest

<https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/newsroom/release/67291>



Shown here is the 2023 turkey stamp winning artwork by Sam Timm of Wautoma.

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) is now accepting artwork entries for the Wild Turkey, Pheasant and Waterfowl Stamp design contests. The winning designs will appear on the 2024 collection of stamps.

Each year, local artists from around Wisconsin compete for an opportunity to have their artwork commemorated in a historic way on the wild turkey, pheasant and waterfowl stamps.

Sales of these three stamps bring in hundreds of thousands of dollars annually for species management throughout the state, including habitat management, restoration, education and research projects. Hunters are required to purchase stamps to harvest these game birds.

The contest is open to anyone 18 years of age or older living in Wisconsin who is a U.S. citizen or legal permanent resident. Artwork must meet technical requirements to be eligible, and applicants should carefully review the contest rules to ensure their entries' eligibility.

The deadline to submit stamp designs is July 15, 2023. Judging will take place on Aug. 26, 2023 at the Waterfowl Hunters Expo in Oshkosh, WI. The 2023 Wild Turkey, Pheasant, and Waterfowl Stamp design contest winner was Sam Timm of Wautoma, who swept all three categories of wild turkey, pheasant and waterfowl. [Rules, entry information and reproduction rights agreements are available on the DNR website.](#)



All stamp contest applicants should review contest rules carefully to ensure the eligibility of their entries. Artwork must meet technical requirements to be properly processed and prepared for judging and display.

Subscribe to [Wisconsin DNR email updates](#) to receive text or email updates about the contest. Find the Wildlife Management topic, and click the checkbox next to the Waterfowl, Wild Turkey and Pheasant Stamp Design Contests topic.

DNR To Host Public Meetings for Proposed Fall Migratory Game Bird Hunting Seasons

<https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/newsroom/release/67536>

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) today announced a series of public meetings to present information on the proposed 2023-2025 migratory game bird seasons. The public is encouraged to attend and provide feedback in the manner they prefer.

The 2023-2025 season proposal details will be finalized and available for public review following the Migratory Game Bird Committee meeting on Feb. 28.

“The DNR has made the decision to set the migratory game bird seasons for multiple years to create more consistency across seasons. We hope the public takes advantage of our many input opportunities during this important review and comment period,” said Taylor Finger, DNR Game Bird Specialist.



Because migratory bird season dates and structures don't often change on a year-to-year basis, the DNR is moving to a multi-year season setting structure to simplify the regulation process. In addition to this change, public hearings will take place both in-person and virtually to provide more options for anyone interested in providing input on the migratory bird season structure.

EVENT DETAILS – LA CROSSE MEETING

WHAT: Proposed 2023-2025 Migratory Game Bird Season Public Meeting
WHEN: Tuesday, March 7 at 7 p.m.
WHERE: La Crosse State Office Building
Rooms B-19 and B-20 3550
Mormon Coulee Rd.
La Crosse, WI 54601

EVENT DETAILS – ZOOM MEETING

WHAT: Proposed 2023-2025 Migratory Game Bird Season Public Meeting
WHEN: Wednesday, March 8 at 7 p.m.
WHERE: [Online via Zoom.](#)
Join by phone at 312-626-6799; Meeting ID: 822 3871 8595

EVENT DETAILS – APPLETON MEETING

WHAT: Proposed 2023-2025 Migratory Game Bird Season Public Meeting
WHEN: Thursday, March 9 at 7 p.m.
WHERE: Fox Valley Technical College
D.J. Bordini Center
Room BC112A
5 N Systems Dr.
Appleton, WI 54914

To learn more about waterfowl in Wisconsin and view the 2023-2025 waterfowl season options when available, visit the [DNR's waterfowl hunting webpage.](#)



Attention Anglers - Ice Shanty Removal Dates Approaching

<https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/newsroom/release/67206>



The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) reminds ice anglers that it's time to remove their permanent ice shanties from Wisconsin's waters.

The deadlines to remove permanent ice shanties, or those that are not removed daily, on inland and boundary waters are:

- Wisconsin – Iowa boundary waters by Feb. 20
- Wisconsin – Minnesota boundary waters by March 1
- Inland waters south of Highway 64 by March 5
- Wisconsin – Michigan boundary waters by March 15
- Lake Michigan, Green Bay, Lake Superior and inland waters north of Highway 64 by March 19

Portable ice shanties can still be used after these dates, so long as they are removed from the ice when they are not actively in use and at the end of each day. Owners having difficulty removing their shanty should seek help from local fishing clubs, vendors and other anglers.

The removal deadlines are to ensure shanties are removed and to avoid the additional costs and hazards of shanties breaking through the ice. The DNR reminds ice anglers that [no ice is ever 100% safe](#). The DNR does not monitor ice conditions, so anglers should check with local fishing clubs and bait shops for current ice conditions.

Here are a few ice safety tips to remember:

- ✓ Carry a cell phone, and let people know where you are going and when you'll return home.
- ✓ Wear proper clothing and equipment, including a life jacket or a float coat, to help you stay afloat and to help maintain body heat.
- ✓ Wear ice creepers attached to boots to prevent slipping on clear ice.
- ✓ Carry a spud bar to check the ice while walking to new areas.
- ✓ Carry a few spikes and a length of light rope in an easily accessible pocket to help pull yourself – or others – out of the ice.
- ✓ If you fall in, remain as calm as possible. While attempting to get out of the water, call for help. Anyone who attempts to rescue you should use a rope or something similar to avoid falling through themselves.
- ✓ Do not travel in unfamiliar areas or at night.

Any owners who don't take responsibility for removing their shanty should be reported to the [DNR Violation Hotline](#) online or by calling or texting 1-800-TIP-WNDR or 1-800-847-9367.

Visit the WDNR on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/WIDNR>.



OUTDOOR ALMANAC

3

The furry, light-gray flowers of **pussy willow** burst from their buds.

5

Black Bears are emerging from their winter sleep and looking for food. Bears have excellent memories, so if you live in an area with bears, take down your bird feeders before the bears visit them.

7

Full Moon



8

Several moth species overwinter as caterpillars, including the woolly bear caterpillar of the Isabella tiger moth. When the weather warms, they can be found crawling up sticks and last year's stems looking for a good place to pupate.

10

Skunk cabbages, among the first plants to emerge in spring, appear in wetlands. Soon their unpleasant odor attracts pollinators such as flies and beetles.



12

Silver, red, and sugar maples are flowering. Maple flowers are wind pollinated and have no petals, but these tiny flowers are beautiful, nonetheless.

14

American Woodcock nuptial flights begin about this time, as the snow melts back in open fields. Around sunset listen for the peent call and the whistle of wings.

16

Listen for the distinctive quacking of Wood Frogs in the evening as they gather at vernal pools. They are the first amphibians to emerge in spring and often congregate on pools still partially covered with ice.

17

The first warm (40°F), rainy night will bring out **salamanders** as they migrate from their winter burrows to vernal pools to mate. They spend only a short time at the pools and, soon after mating, head back to the uplands.



20

Vernal equinox: first day of spring. Night and day are of equal length.

24

Beavers have been eating the bark from the sticks they stored underwater last fall. When the ice melts, they come out to eat green plants including water lilies and skunk cabbage.

26

Look and listen for tom turkeys gobbling and displaying. Their heads and wattles turn blue and brilliant red, they fan and waggle their tails, and drag their wings across the ground as they strut back and forth. When you find displaying toms, look around to find the hen, who is usually nearby but often hidden from view.

27

Gray Foxes are giving birth with 1-4 pups in a litter. These pups will stay in the den for the next month, and by the time they are three months old, they will learn to hunt on their own. Gray Foxes have a dark tail with a black tip while Red Foxes have a white tail tip. Also, if you see a fox in a tree, it's definitely a Gray Fox as Red Foxes don't climb trees.

30

Tree Swallows return. Look for them scouting for nest boxes or tree cavities as breeding season begins.



massaudubon.org



March Monthly Gardening Checklist

<https://www.melindamyers.com/garden-how-to/monthly-gardening-checklists/march>



- Start removing winter protection when temperatures begin hovering above freezing for about a week or new growth appears.
- Gently tamp back into the soil or replant any coral bells, daylilies and other perennials that frost heaved out of the soil.
- As the snow and ice recede, it's time to get busy cleaning up the garden. Remove any stems and seedpods left for winter interest. Wait to compost any items that might be housing beneficial insects. Pile them out of the way – then compost in early summer.
- Prune Russian sage, Caryopteris, & butterfly bushes (non-invasive cultivars) down to 6 inches above the soil.

- Apply a low-nitrogen slow release fertilizer to hardy bulbs, in need of a nutrient boost, as soon as they emerge from the soil.
- Take a soil test anytime the ground is not frozen or hasn't been recently fertilized. The results will help you determine how much and what type of fertilizer you need for the plants you are growing.
- Locate areas in your landscape where you want to add new planting beds. Northern gardeners may need to wait for the snow and ice to recede.
- Begin soil preparation as soon as the soil can be worked. Grab a handful of soil and lightly squeeze. Gently tap with your finger. If it breaks into smaller pieces, it is ready to work.
- Monitor seedlings for damping off disease that causes seedlings to collapse and the stem to rot at the soil line.
- Start tender bulbs such as cannas, dahlias, caladiums, callas, and tuberous begonias indoors for earlier bloom in the garden.

- Plant transplants of cool season annuals such as sweet alyssum, pinks, calendulas, snapdragons and pansies as soon as they are available in the garden center.
- Dig and divide overgrown and crowded summer and fall blooming perennials and ornamental grasses as soon as new growth emerges. Some of us are waiting for the snow to melt.
- Repair, locate or purchase cold frames, row covers and other season-extending materials if you plan an early start to the growing season.
- Continue monitoring existing and new plantings for animal damage. Make sure fencing is secure, replenish repellents as needed and alternate scare tactics. Use a variety of tactics for the greatest success.

For more monthly gardening checklists, upcoming free webinars, and general garden how-tos and informational resources, visit <https://www.melindamyers.com/>.

